DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 316 309 PS 018 361

AUTHOR Burns, Valerie
TITLE Early Childhood Education in New Zealand: The Quiet Revolution.
PUB DATE 12 Jul 89
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at the Organisation Mondiale pour L'Education Prescolaire (OMEP) World Assembly and Congress (London, England, July 11-14, 1989).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Delivery Systems; *Early Childhood Education; Educational Administration; *Educational Change; Educational Objectives; *Educational Policy; Federal Government; Foreign Countries; *Government (Administrative Body); *Government Role; Organizational Change; Social Change
IDENTIFIERS *New Zealand

ABSTRACT

This paper outlines a quiet revolution in early childhood care and education in New Zealand. In 1986, child care services were transferred from the Department of Social Welfare to the Department of Education. A working group then reviewed provisions and made recommendations. In January, 1989, an implementation unit was established in the Department of Education to carry out administrative tasks required for the establishment of a new administrative structure and policy base for early childhood education. In the future, a Ministry of Education will be responsible for providing policy advice to the Minister of Education on all aspects of education and for overseeing the implementation of national policies approved by the Minister. The most visible central agency for the support and development of early childhood services will be the Early Childhood Development Unit. For the first 2 years of operation, the Unit will be fully funded by the Ministry, and will thereafter charge a fee for services. Another new agency, the Education Review Office will ensure that all early childhood services are accountable for government funds they spend and for meeting objectives negotiated in their charter. A Special Education Advisory Service will provide support services to early childhood. Implications of these developments are discussed. (RH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED316309

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

OMEP XIX WORLD ASSEMBLY AND CONGRESS

The Voice of the Child

- Who Speaks? - Who Cares? - Who Listens?

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN NEW ZEALAND

- THE QUIET REVOLUTION

Valerie Burns
Director Early Childhood Education
Department of Education
New Zealand

12 July 1989

PS 018361

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Valerie Jeanette Burns
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Some people call it reform, others restructuring, Colin James, an economic journalist, calls it "a quiet revolution". Whatever name is applied to the social and economic environment of the country - once called "God's Own" - New Zealand is certainly in the midst of change of an unprecedented scale. Prior to the 1980's New Zealanders had enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in the world. Successive Government's after the 1930's depression had promoted a policy of full employment. New Zealand pioneered the Welfare State and most New Zealanders regarded this concept so basic to their society that they did not anticipate the traumatic changes that have eventuated since the election of the fourth Labour Government in 1984. From a situation of full employment in the 1970's, in 1989 there were 145,000 unemployed out of a total population of just over 3M. This is over 8% of the workforce. New Zealanders reel daily from news of company failures, and corporate giants going into receivership. The news of another 100 jobs lost is no longer a matter of comment.

Depending on a person's point of view, New Zealand is facing up to the challenge of the twenty-first century and the "real world", or regressing into increasing economic depression. New Zealanders once accused of being a molly-coddled nation, over-protected by successive governments are now coping with change. Everyone has been affected by the comprehensive reform programme. New Zealand is in a transition stage and no-one knows whether these reforms will work. Many are bewildered, some feel betrayed, others think it is a too dangerous experiment for a small country. The change and reform they first so enthusiastically supported now seems all too hard. There is no turning back the clock however, and the future appears frightening for some and a time of opportunity, challenge and the forging of a new and different New Zealand society for others. Our Defence Policy has been radically reshaped and attracted world attention. The once tightly regulated finance sector has become one of the freest in the world. Far reaching tax reforms have been legislated and important constitutional changes,in the form of a Bill of Rights, the State Sector Bill, the Waitangi Tribunal and Maori land claims have been implemented. The Treaty of Waitangi has gained a new importance as New Zealanders come to terms with a growing awareness of the need to recognise Maori people as the Tangata Whenua of New Zealand. Tangata Whenua means people of the land. New Zealand is in the midst of the painful, turbulent years of adolescence as it strives towards the maturity of adulthood.

The once strong centralised government departments have been reformed in to smaller more independent devolved organisations. Some have been turned into State Owned Enterprises and exercise a degree of autonomy and a

commercial orientation emulating private enterprise principles not previously practised in government controlled organisations. The government is in the process of disposing of many of the national assets to private enterprise. This has caused public consternation and an accusation from the Opposition that the country is selling the "family silver".

At the time of my departure the latest government department to enter the Place de la Concorde and face the guillotine is the Department of Education. Already Madame Defarge has knitted into her scarf the names of many senior departmental officials. In the cart along with the Department of Education are the Education Boards, University Grants Committee, Secondary School Boards, Multi-school Boards, the Authority for Advanced Vocational Studies, Trades Certification Boards and the Vocational Training Council. Some 3407 people in total are about to be restructured into new organisations requiring 2077 staff. The guillotine falls on 30 September 1989.

In the midst of this climate, the Cinderella service of education, as early childhood education has so often been dubbed in New Zealand, is receiving favourable government attention and offers hope and a prospect of considerably improved conditions and funding support. In the 28 July Budget the Prime Minister, who is also the Minister of Education, will announce the extent of the priority given to early childhood education. On that evening, the funding formula for the reforms in this sector will be detailed.

In February this year, the Prime Minister launched the government's policy intentions for early childhood education in a booklet called "Before Five". This booklet can be gained by writing to the Department of Education, Box 1379, Wellington, New Zealand. The government's policy commitment to improve the standards of care and education had been a priority commitment in their 1984 policy manifesto. From this beginning the government began a quiet revolution in early childhood education in New Zealand.

The first move was to transfer childcare services from the Department of Social Welfare to the Department of Education in 1986. This transition had been signalled by the government at a national Forum on Early Childhood Care and Education chaired by the then Minister of Education, the Hon Russell Marshall and opened by the Prime Minister in 1984. There was widespread support for combining care and education under one government agency. New Zealand no longer makes the distinction between care and education. It recognises that the younger the child the more impossible it is to separate these two components.

The placing of all early childhood services except Te Kohanga Reo under the administrative responsibility of the Department of Education could not however deliver accessible, affordable and equitably funded early childhood services without a radical change to existing policy. The next step was to establish a working group chaired by Dr Anne Meade to review existing provisions and make recommendations. The report of this group, "Education to be More" was presented to the government in August 1988. Its terms of reference were:-

Definition

Early childhood care and education in these terms of reference includes all formal state and independent arrangements for the care and education of infants and children up to the age of 6, including extension and advisory services. It excludes primary schools, institutional and other arrangments for sick and abused children, or other specialised services such as foster homes for children with special requirements.

Tasks

The group will provide a short restatement of the purpose, place, form and function of early childhood care and education and advise and recommend on:

* the respective roles and responsibilities of the family and community, and the government in the provision of care and education for infants and young children.

* the role and responsibility of the government in relation to:

i
- children's social development and the well-being of society
- the relationship of early childhood care and education to the education system as a whole
- the need for more equitable access to childhood care and education
- the need for more equitable funding and funding processes
- the balance between the private and social costs and benefits of early childhood care and education including funding, management and accountability arrangements
- the budgetary effects of government interventions

ii
- appropriate institutional arrangements for the development of policy advice for the government and for the implementation of the government

policy including the extent and nature of the government's supervisory, co-ordinating and monitoring responsibilities and how these should be fulfilled.

* the effectiveness, efficiency, responsiveness and appropriateness of current interventions including delivery systems in early childhood care and education.

* the costs and benefits of early childhood care and education services to children, parents, providers, employers,and society.

* the reform of current interventions including delivery systems in early childhood care and education.

* suggest appropriate transitional arrangements.

The deliberations of this committee published in the report "Education to be More" were received favourably by the public and the government. Comment was called for and responses were collated and the government established an officials committee to consider the options. This process culminated in the publication of the government's policy intentions for the future direction of early childhood education in the booklet "Before Five". The quiet revolution in early childhood education was underway.

In January this year an implementation unit was established in the Department of Education to carry out the administrative tasks required to establish a totally new administrative structure and policy base for early childhood education. Reformed central structures for the administration of education will be established and operating on 1 October 1989. Changes to the funding formula will put all early childhood services on the same formula base on 1 January 1990. Funding will be delivered in the form of a bulk grant to be calculated on the basis of the number of children enrolled for each session, with a session lasting between 2.5 and 3.0 hours. No services will be funded for more than two such sessions a day. The maximum level of government subsidy will be 30 hours over seven days. At present kindergarten services receive considerably more government assistance than any of the other twenty five early childhood services. The government has announced that there will be no reduction in the funding allocation for kindergarten services. Over time it is the government's intention to bring all other early childhood services to the same level as that already provided for the kindergarten service. The actual sums of money attached to this formula for kindergartens and other early childhood services will be announced on 28 July. It is expected that there will be a

considerable improvement to government funding support for all other early childhood services than kindergartens.

The present expenditure in early childhood care and education services is about $83m. The Meade Committee estimated that it would require approximately $165m to subsidise all early childhood services to the same level as kindergartens. Regardless of the funding formula to be announced in the July budget, it has already been foreshadowed that it will be a considerable increase in government expenditure for early childhood education. The Prime Minister has said on several occasions that he regards an investment in early childhood education as an investment in the future. The research findings initiated by Dr David Weikart and confirmed by the Consortium of Longtitudinal Studies in Early Childhood Education (Lazar et al) have been studied by the government in New Zealand and accepted that early childhood education does enhance the individual child's learning and the advantages gained, help create success in adult life.

This should be heartening news for early childhood educators internationally. The reforms in early childhood education in New Zealand are based on educational principles and arguments as well as a recognition of the changed family life styles and changed role of women in society. This should mean that continuing government support for early childhood education is less likely to be governed by the whims and needs of the female labour market force than is evidenced in some other country's provision for early childhood services. Early childhood education is now firmly established as a sector in its own right within the education system of New Zealand.

I have already indicated that the reforms in early childhood education go well beyond the provision of equitable funding for early childhood services. These services will be supported and monitored by a network of new central administrative agencies.

The Ministry of Education will be responsible for policy advice to the Minister on all aspects of education, and oversee the implementation of national policies approved by the Minister. It will not be a direct provider of education services, although it will contract other agencies and individuals to provide certain services. The Ministry will be accountable through a Chief Executive Officer to the Minister. Its functions include policy advice and development, property management, research and statistics services, and operational activities particularly in relation to the negotiation and development of charters to the deliverers of education services.

The first Chief Executive Officer to be appointed to the new Ministry of Education is Dr Maris O'Rourke, a woman early childhood educator. Her appointment to this key position is exciting news indeed for early childhood education. It heralds that early childhood education has indeed arrived and the quiet revolution is here to stay. The specific responsibilities for early childhood education for the Ministry include:-

* policy advice to the Minister on early childhood care and education matters including training for early childhood workers and teachers
* negotiating charters with early childhood services
* delivering bulk grant funding to services
* providing funding assistance such as discretionary grants and loans.

The most visible central agency for the support and development of early childhood services will be the Early Childhood Development Unit. This is to be a free-standing self-administering body with the following functions:-

* community development activities involving support and advice to families and communities wishing to establish home or centre-based early childhood services
* liaison and co-ordination activities for early childhood services
* in-service and training for early education staff, including management, volunteers, parents and families
* gathering information on early childhood services
* liaison and exchange of expertise with special education service
* providing a safety net service for organising administrative service contracts for an agreed time on behalf of any centre which feels unable to manage their own affairs
* any other activities in the field of early childhood education as may be contracted by the Ministry or by others clients such as early childhood centres and organisations.

For the first two years of its operation, the Early Childhood Development Unit will be fully funded by the Ministry of Education. After the first two years, the Early Childhood Development Unit will charge for its services. In cases where the Ministry specifically requires the unit to carry out certain programmes and activities on its behalf, the Ministry will be deemed to be the "user" and will bear the costs of this. In cases where the early childhood services do not have their own advisors, the services can contract with the Early Childhood Development Unit for advice and support, or obtain it from other sources. The bulk grant will make provision for the costs of obtaining advice and support. The performance of the Early Childhood Development

Unit will be assessed by the Education Review Office when it conducts its regular review of individual early childhood services.

Another new agency, the Education Review Office will ensure that all early childhood services are accountable for the government funds they spend and for meeting the objectives negotiated within their charter. The agency will itself be accountable through a Chief Executive Officer to the Minister of Education. The Education Review Office will monitor chartered early childhood services at least once a year. The approach to this monitoring work is to be essentially developmental. As a result of its reviews the Education Review Office will provide comment on the adequacy of charters to both the Ministry of Education and individual early childhood services. The management of the early childhood services will send an annual set of accounts, plus an accountant's report to the Education Review Agency. The Education Review Office will also be responsible for monitoring non-chartered services, that is those services which are licensed but do not receive additional government funding assistance. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the conditions of the licence are met.

A parallel self-administering, free-standing "Special Education Advisory Service" will be another important support service for early childhood. It is to provide services from early childhood education to tertiary and its main functions include:-

* provision of co-ordinated services to work in conjunction with governing authorities of educational institutions, principles, teaching staff and parents who require advice or support in making provision for learners from early childhood to tertiary
* advice to government of educational institutions, principles and teaching staff on the assessment of learners, the evaluation of programmes and programme adaptation
* where appropriate provide services directly to learners
* advising the Minister of Education on policy and funding when requested
* such other activities in the interests of learners as may be contracted by the Ministry.

The work of the Special Education Advisory Services will be free of charge to all educational services and individual families who have children with disabilities. The establishment of this service with the expressed function of providing special education advisory support free of charge to individual families who have children with disabilities,

is likely to result in an increase of personnel and a focus on early intervention. This is an exciting new development and should make a significant impact on the government's policy of mainstreaming children with disabilities. The Special Education Service will include special education advisors, visiting teachers, speech language therapists and advisors for the education of handicapped, deaf and visually impaired children. As part of its contract with the Ministry of Education, it must ensure a certain proportion of specialist staff with expertise in early childhood education and in the developmental needs of infants and pre-school children. Supporting these developments is a special needs weighting within the bulk grant for children with special educational needs. The Education Review Office will monitor the supply of special education services to early childhood services through its regular review of individual early childhood services. The Education Review Office will also undertake special reviews or studies of families satisfaction as it sees fit.

The reform of education administration in New Zealand has placed great emphasis on parent involvement and participation in all sectors of education. An innovation to this reform process is the establishment of an independent Parent Advocacy Council to promote the interests of parents at all levels of education. Its role will be one of "last resort" and it will report directly to Parliament on an annual basis. The Council's members will include two early childhood representatives whose function will be to attend to the information and advocacy needs of families with pre-school children.

Innovative and progressive government policies and a reformed central administrative structure would not be sufficient to bring about a revolution in early childhood education without attention to the provision of quality. Funding support is obviously critical to this aspect. I have already indicated the government's policy intention to provide equitable funding across all services. In order for a service to qualify for government subsidy certain requirements will be established in national guidelines which will form a basis for the negotiation of a charter between the Ministry of Education and an early childhood centre. The government is yet to announce its policy decisions on the specific requirements within national guidelines. These are expected in August. The national guidelines will set overall standards. Services wishing to receive Vote:Education funding must have a charter which has been drawn up within the national guidelines. Services that do not have a charter must be licenced and the licencing system will ensure that basic standards of staffing, safety, hygiene and curriculum are met. National guidelines for early childhood care and

education will be drawn up using a consultative approach involving government agencies, unions, services, parents and the community. The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi will be taken into account when formulating the guidelines. These guidelines will provide minimum standards of quality for the provision of centre- and home-based early childhood care and education. There will be guidelines for land, buildings, safety, equipment, staffing, curriculum, special education and parent education and support. There will also be guidelines for staff development, advisory support, the conduct of management committees and proprietors, child management, role of parents in decision making, charter preparation, community involvement and any other matters considered appropriate. The national guidelines will cover home-based schemes as well as centre-based provision. Guidelines for home-based care and education will differ in detail where this appropriate. The initial national guidelines will be reviewed within five years.

It is important to note that the national guidelines on staffing will include statements on appropriate types of qualification and experience, the minimum number of qualified staff for any centre, staff/child ratio requirements and details of professional support for staff. The requirement of a charter which incorporates national guidelines is a requirement for any learning institution from early childhood centres to universities if government assistance is to be gained.

There is increasing debate within New Zealand as to whether the proposed reforms genuinely devolve decision-making to local level or whether in the final analysis there is increased central control. Only time and evaluation processes will give answer to this debate. Ideally, the position should be that it is a partnership arrangement between the state, which has a requirement of accountability to the taxpayer, and the local community which has an obligation to meet the needs of its particular local area. Striking the balance between these two goals may result in a conflict of interest between the "national good" and the local perception of their needs and requirements. The age old debate on whether it is the purpose of education to advance and promote social change or reflect the status quo of any given society remains unresolved.

The management structures for early childhood services will be determined by the service. Individual owners of early childhood centres who operate on a basis of requiring a profit are eligible for government assistance at the same level as those who establish early childhood centres on a so-called non-profit making basis. The rich diversity of management structures and types of service within early

childhood education are to be preserved. The government has indicated that it will subsidise a proportion of the total cost of an early childhood service. Parental contribution however is still expected. Kindergartens in New Zealand are at present subsidised by Government to about 85% of their total cost. If all other services are brought up to this level of government subsidy then it is expected that parental contributions particularly for childcare services will be reduced. Kindergartens however who have traditionally not charged fees are likely to do so.

It is also expected that increased government assistance will enable childcare centres to improve their conditions of service, particularly the rates of pay for childcare workers.

In 1987, a new integrated three-year pre-service early childhood training course was introduced into two teachers' colleges within New Zealand. By 1990, all teacher training colleges will only be offering a three-year integrated early childhood care and education course leading to the Diploma in Teaching. Negotiations with other training providers who offer limited certificate courses in early childhood education has lead to an agreed plan for present early childhood personnel to gain credit and undertake further training to reach equivalency with the three-year pre-service course. At this stage, it is intended that the basic qualification for recognition as trained and qualified in early childhood education be the three-year pre-service course or its equivalent by the year 2000. This will enable early childhood personnel to gain additional qualifications over an eleven year period. This policy development is likely to lead to a variety of field-based, on-the-job training delivery services. It will enable a more flexible approach to teacher training and greater access for adults in the community who have an interest and talent for working with young children.

The final aspect of the government's comprehensive reforms in early childhood education is the provision of discretionary grants for the establishment of early childhood services to assist with the capital costs of providing accommodation. Non-profit making services will have priority for these grants. Preference for discretionary grants will be given to managements who have a proposal approved by the Ministry, who have little in the way of capital assets as collateral or security for commercial loans, and who because of factors outside their control are likely to receive only an average or below average bulk grant. Discretionary grants for seeding non-capital purposes will be no more than $10,000. Discretionary grants for capital purposes which exceed $15,000 may require special criteria for repayment of the

grant in some circumstances, e.g. if the centre closes. The managements of services will be able to borrow money commercially. Profit making services and those with considerable capital assets will be expected to fund their future capital requirements from the private sector. The Ministry of Education will also operate a loans scheme. These loans will be available only to services which use or have approval to use Crown Land or property through a "license to occupy" and which also have a limited ability to raise loans commercially even when the Crown acts as a guarantor. Any loans from the Ministry of Education will be on commercial terms. Where loan costs are too high for some early childhood services, they will be treated favourably for discretionary grants. The government will fund the full cost of building for an early childhood service only in exceptional circumstances such as pre-school classes in primary schools or where special assistance is the only option. In these situations, the Crown will retain ownership of the premises and the chartered services using them will be asked to pay rent.

This paper has outlined what is indeed a quiet revolution in early childhood care and education. The implications of these reforms could be far-reaching. Policy provision for children under the age of five aims to provide incentives for accessible and affordable early childhood services in all communities. The policy reforms are comprehensive and a new administrative structure has been planned to support these developments. Existing services should be able to deliver a more flexible service which meets the needs of local communities they serve. Parents may be able to avoid the practice of multiple packaging of early childhood services in order to meet care arrangements for their children. The effects of this multiple packaging on children has not been researched in New Zealand. We do know, however, from child development research that it is vital to ensure that young children have a stability in their environment to meet their emotional and security needs. The reforms should go some way in stabilising the care environment for children.

Their is some concern that all early childhood services will become similar in their operation and the rich diversity of provision which exists at present will be lost. I do not share this view, rather I see the development of new and more flexible early childhood services which will be targetted to meet the specific family needs of their local community.

Participation rates in early childhood education are likely to increase. At present, New Zealand has about 90% of its four-year olds in some form of early childhood service and about 63% of all three-year olds. 20% of children under the age of two receive some form of early childhood education.

There is likely to be a substantial increase in participation rates of children under the age of four. As in most other countries, it is children from lower socio-economic families or ethnic minorities who have traditionally not used early childhood services. Targetted policies are likely to be introduced to enable early childhood services to be more accessible and suitable for meeting these groups needs.

It should be possible for particular philosophical and idealogical movements to establish their own early childhood services. In the 1980's New Zealand has seen a substantial increase in the development of early childhood services established for the express purpose of maintaining mother tongue languages other than English, and passing on cultural values different from those of mainstream New Zealand. Maori people have established Te Kohanga Reo centres to maintain Maori language and ensure that it remains a living language within New Zealand. The target is to have 75% of all Maori people fluent in their language. More recently Pacific Island early childhood language centres have been established. In 1989 these centres grew from 15 at the beginning of the year to 76 by June. It is expected that other minority ethnic groups will follow the example of Maori and Pacific Island people and establish their own early childhood centres. New Zealand is growing towards an acceptance of cultural diversity and developing a rich mosaic of early childhood provision for its young children and their families.

Heavy emphasis throughout the government's reforms in education has been placed on the importance and central role of parents. Early childhood services will be expected to provide parent support and education programmes as well as involve parents in the management and curriculum of early childhood services. The consequences of involving parents as partners in education has been a philosophy well established in New Zealand by the Playcentre movement. It is hoped that parents will gain support and information on child management and assistance in their vital role of being the first and only long-term continuing teacher of their children. The government, through its reforms, is acknowledging the importance of this role and providing support, but not taking away the responsibilities of parenthood from parents.

Given the country's circumstances, briefly outlined at the beginning of this paper, why is the New Zealand Government in spite of a large deficit and heavy overseas debt, choosing to spend public money on early childhood education? It is a question I have not heard asked in New Zealand. Newspapers and the Opposition appear to be supportive of a re-allocation of money to early childhood education. Few people are

questioning its importance and appear to support it having a greater share of Vote:Education.

There are three reasons, among others, which could be the answer. New Zealand has a strong women's movement and in 1975 at the Economic Development Conference for Women, the major issue identified to assist women gain equal employment opportunities was the provision of accessible and affordable early childhood services. This demand, especially for childcare, has increased as women with children under the age of five years participate in the full-time labour force. In 1976, 14% of women with children under the age of five worked full-time in paid employment. In 1986 this had risen to 23%. The percentage of women in part-time employment with children under the age of five rose over the same period from 20% to 32%.

This means that over 50% of women with young children are now in need of substitute care for their children for part of the day.

The government's equal employment opportunity programme is also enabling more women to attain senior decision-making positions. This is an important influence, as these women collectively support the need for improved early childhood services and bring pressure to bear on their male colleagues to recognise this need.

As women have gained skills and become a recognised pool of talent and expertise, employers likewise become more interested in supporting early childhood services as a means of retaining experienced female staff.

New Zealand has been particularly fortunate in having two successive Ministers of Education giving emphasis and priority to early childhood education. There is no doubt it helps to have the Prime Minister a keen advocate. One of his key advisors on social policy , Dr Anne Meade, is an early childhood education expert. Now with the recent appointment of the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Education coming from early childhood education, the future looks promising and exciting. The Cinderella service may well have met Prince Charming.

The third reason for the overall climate of support is due to the work of the twenty-six different services which have continually struggled to provide for the needs of young children and their families. The Kindergarten, Playcentre, Childcare and Te Kohanga Reo movements and latterly the Pacific Island Language Groups have all seeded a groundswell of support. Parent involvement was pioneeered by the Playcentre movement and is very much part and parcel of most

early childhood services. This has built up a community of adults who have experienced and know its value. All these movements have become more politically sophisticated in the 1980's and have adopted a cohesive, united approach to lobbying Government for recognition.

The government has recognised the potential for enabling equal educational opportunities through the provision of early childhood services. It has announced its policy intentions and implemented the reforms for education administration including early childhood education as a fully fledged important sector within the education system. The July budget will announce substantial government assistance to implement these reforms. Early childhood education in New Zealand has been recognised as an investment in the future. It is indeed a quiet revolution

References

The Quiet Revolution - Colin James: publishers Allan & Unwin

Before Five - NZ Government: Printer Government Print, Wellington

Education to be More: Report of the Working Party on Early Childhood Care and Education - NZ Government: Printer Government Print, Wellington

Birth to Death II: NZ Planning Council 1989